

THE SOUTH CAROLINA VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION DEPARTMENT

**VR³ Ready...Reliable...Results**

August 2013

Summer filled with options for transition students

Walterboro Career Fair



The Walterboro Area Office held a Career Fair, on June 27, 2013 from 9:00 AM to 3:00 PM, giving students a chance to learn about training programs, technical school, college, and job options available to them after high school graduation.

Participating schools, including Job Corps, Technical College of the Lowcountry, ARC Labs, USC Salkahatchie, and Adult Education, explained their programs and presented a diversity of options to the students.

Representatives from local businesses, including Tire King, Microtel, Palmetto Hair Gallery & Day Spa, and the Colleton County Sheriff's Department, spoke to the students about their jobs. VR Maintenance/Landscaper Nolan Simmons demonstrated the work that he does both inside the buildings, performing maintenance work, and outside, making sure that our grounds are always inviting. A Bank of Walterboro representative taught classes on budgeting and the importance of having a bank account, and VR's C.J. Bilka helped them understand work incentives for those receiving disability benefits.

Laurens students visit East Glenn Farms

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Stacie Smith, Laurens Office Business Development Specialist (BDS), and Gloria Patrick, transition counselor, coordinated with East Glenn Farms to provide a tour for students who are interested in farming and agriculture. East Glenn Farms produces products primarily for Pet Milk and has been in business for almost 100 years. They have over 300 head of Jersey cows and milk all 300 twice daily.

During the visit two calves were born. The students learned that these farmers work almost 12 hours a day and need to be available 365 days a year. They gained background knowledge about the science involved in breeding lines, monthly veterinarian assistance needed, and the legal guidelines from state and federal government. They also discovered the many nutritional benefits milk can provide and how the \$4.00 per gallon we pay is a lot of bang for the buck.

High School/ High Tech internships in Anderson



High School/High Tech students in Anderson benefit from VR partnership with TTI Group of North America.

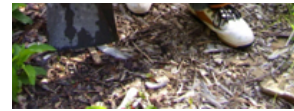
[Read the full story in the Anderson Independent Mail.](#)

Summer internship at Clemson Botanical Gardens

Jaml Hunter, a graduate of Pendleton High School, has participated in a summer internship at the Clemson Botanical Gardens.

Jaml's interests include horticulture and landscaping architecture. He has been involved in the maintenance and upkeep of the Botanical Gardens as part of a team of Clemson students. His work has included planting and building a pathway in the gardens.





Life After High School workshop in Spartanburg



During Spartanburg's two-day *Life after High School* Workshop, students discussed the on-the-job trainings that they participated in during their senior year, what it takes for a successful employment outcome, the importance of being a team player and being on time.

This event helped students familiarize themselves with the VR office and see their counselor as independent from their school teachers, yet part of a team working towards their success.

The workshops were very interactive, including both parents and students. The groups discussed how to move forward to obtain and maintain successful employment. Students toured the training center, learning about job club and the benefits of Job Preparedness Instruction (JPI).

Lexington's Summer Institute



Students from Lexington County schools attended Job Preparedness Instruction (JPI) classes and participated in Job Readiness Training to assist with employability skills.

Students also toured Midlands Technical College, learning about many different courses, where classes are held and other services available. Finally, students toured the State House, learning its history and viewing both the Senate and House Chambers.





Lexington transition students help out at Habitat for Humanity.

Job Fair in Aiken



The Aiken Area Office held a Job Fair on June 27, 2013 with two local employers. Abacus interviewed potential candidates for Forklift Operator and The City of Aiken interviewed for Maintenance and Community Resource Officer positions.

Following the interviews transition student Joseph Hasley was hired immediately by Abacus. Three others went on to second interviews.

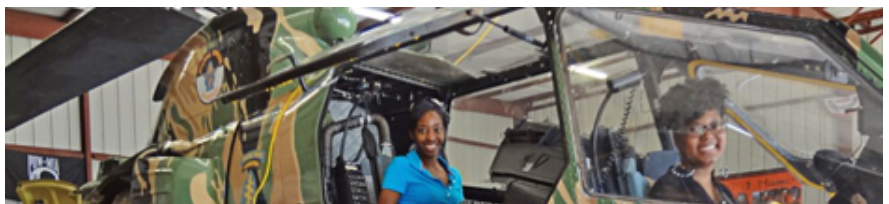
Summer transition classes at Richland

The Richland Area Office packed many educational and fun events into two weeks this summer for transition students. Classes included Etiquette for Job Hunters and Budgeting and Resume Development. Among the speakers were Sandy Twilley, Plant Support Engineer at the SCE&G Sumter facility and Steven Langer, Job Developer with Project HOPE.

Along with the educational sessions, students enjoyed hands-on learning through many fun day trips, visiting such diverse places as the SC State House, SC State University, the State Museum, IT-oLogy, Columbia Metropolitan Airport, Midlands Tech and the SC Aquarium.



Evaluation Center STEPS





The Evaluation Center's Summer Transition Evaluation Program for Students (STEPS) is a two week session for transition students that includes team building classes, career exploration, and job preparedness. This summer students also enjoyed a special educational outing.

Larry Russell, Executive Director of the Celebrate Freedom Foundation, arranged for the students to visit the Columbia Metropolitan Airport and see refurbished military vehicles that date back to World War II. They then visited an airplane hanger where a helicopter was in the process of being refurbished. Russell explained that a pilot is just one of many jobs in aviation, no less important than the people who build, paint, and maintain the aircraft.

Commented one student: "I love this and wish I could come back and learn to work on one of these."

Youth Leadership Forum



A record number of students attended this year's Youth Leadership Forum (YLF) in July. Thirty-three high school juniors and seniors with disabilities from schools around the state participated in the three day event. They engaged in leadership, team building and self-advocacy classes at Newberry College before challenging themselves on the low and high ropes courses at the Wil Lou Gray Opportunity School.

Speakers included Betsy Valnes, Executive Director of the National Youth Leadership Network and Newberry College football coach Todd Knight. Coach Knight surprised everyone when he brought out a special guest: Ron Parker, cornerback for the Seattle Seahawks.

The last day was highlighted by the mentor lunch, where the students got

to interact with professionals working in their areas of interest. Mentors represented a wide variety of career fields including teaching, culinary arts, counseling, computer design, graphic design, child care, nursing, law enforcement, music, library sciences and animal care/zookeeping.

At the end of the last session, students were "surprised and amazed" at how much they had learned and the strength of the bonds they had formed in just three days. Many of them stated the same thing: "I don't want this to end."

"I really enjoyed the ropes course, all of the activities and the guest speakers," says student Shelly Jeffers. Her mother, Sherry, after hearing from Shelly all that she accomplished, called YLF "a joyful and learning experience. This really touched my heart."

Did you know...

...that the Smithsonian Institution has launched an exclusively online exhibit about the history of disability in America?



"[EveryBody: An Artifact History of Disability in America](http://everybody.si.edu)" has been compiled "to explore themes and events related to the history of people with disabilities in the U.S. and offer a new perspective on American history," according to a museum news release. The information is presented in English and Spanish, and the website is designed to be accessible to all users.

Visit the website at everybody.si.edu.

Events

The Bryant Center

- July 29-August 9 - Session 4: **Summer Transition Program**. Students will participate in physical therapy and exercise; learn independent living skills through occupational therapy; enhance leadership, teamwork and communication skills; explore careers and post-secondary interests; and engage in mock interviews and other job preparedness activities. Session meets 9 am-12 pm Monday, Wednesday and Friday. To refer a student, please fax a SCVR 219, SCVR 318, SCVR 318a (signed by the student and parent) and a Comprehensive Center referral form to Jennie Thomas at 864-949-6775.
For more information, call 864-249-8030 or 888-322-9391

Comprehensive Evaluation Center (CEC)

- July 22-August 9 - Session 3: **Summer Transition Evaluation Program for Students (STEPS)**. Students will participate in physical therapy/exercise, occupational therapy, nutrition counseling, career exploration, and work readiness activities.
For more information, contact Gloria Plotnik 803-896-6040

Oconee-Pickens

- August 1, 9am-12pm - **Job Fair**
For more information, call 864-882-6669

Richland

- August 9 - **Summer Slam**: Summer "Wrap Up" activities for transition students. The program will include student speakers and awards for participation. Guest speakers are on the agenda, to include business and agency partners. Partner awards will also be presented.
For more information, call 803-782-4239 or 866-206-5280

Greenville

- August 8-9 - The **High School/High Tech Summer Institute** will include a tour of Proterra, a new manufacturing company that produces EcoRide™ electric buses for the City of Greenville. To help students to learn about various occupations in healthcare, visits to the Life Center with Greenville Hospital System are also planned. Greenville County Forensics Division will provide opportunities for small-group tours and job shadows. Throughout the summer, focus groups will be meeting to discuss skills for success when pursuing post-secondary education, as well as other activities to encourage leadership and self-advocacy. Internships and job shadows are scheduled with several partners, including Greenville Free Medical Clinic, Proaxis Physical Therapy, Firestone, Kia of Greer, Arché Designs and South Carolina Department of Natural Resources.
For more information, call 864-297-3066

Enabling eligible South Carolinians with disabilities to prepare for, achieve and maintain competitive employment

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